

FEMA Offers Equal Access to All Disaster Survivors

Release Date: Apr 15, 2023

FEMA and the state of Arkansas are committed to providing disaster assistance to people with disabilities and access and functional needs. Assistance is also available for those who communicate in languages other than English.

If you have a disability or require special assistance, please be sure to pay attention to the series of questions about reasonable accommodations on the FEMA application to ensure your specific needs are communicated. Some individuals may have temporary or long-term conditions where they also need a little extra help but might not think to ask for it.

FEMA offers free services to help survivors communicate with FEMA specialists on the phone and provides information in accessible electronic formats on the FEMA website and on social media.

FEMA also provides referrals to federal, state and local partners as well as to community and volunteer agencies that participate in the recovery process.

Reasonable Accommodations

If you need an accommodation or assistance due to a disability, ask FEMA at the time of applying or anytime throughout the assistance process. Here's how:

- Call the disaster assistance helpline at **800-621-3362**. If you use a relay service, such as video relay service (VRS), captioned telephone service or others, give FEMA the number for that service. The toll-free telephone lines operate from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. CDT seven days a week.
- FEMA can provide interpreters, real-time captioning, and information in alternate formats such as large- print, audio, and electronic versions.
- The agency also provides free services to help survivors communicate with its staff and understand FEMA programs. Among the aids are:



- Information available in accessible electronic formats on FEMA's website and social media
- Qualified American Sign Language interpreters
- Qualified multilingual interpreters
- Information written in multiple languages

People with disabilities may be eligible for financial assistance to replace their accessibility equipment (i.e., wheelchairs, hearing aids) if those items were damaged or lost as a result of the recent severe storms and tornadoes.

When you apply for assistance, also have the following information readily available:

- A current phone number where you can be contacted.
- Your address at the time of the disaster and the address where you are now staying.
- Your Social Security number, if available.
- A general list of damage and losses if you know what they are.
- Your insurance policy number and the name of your agent or company.

For an accessible video on how to apply, go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LU7wzRjByhI>.

